## Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as The Alexandria Times and Advertiser

## **Out of the Attic**

## **King Street at Christmas Time**

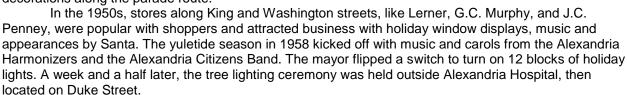
Alexandria Times, December 24, 2015

Image: 300 block King Street, 1960s. Photo, Office of Historic Alexandria.

or decades Christmas traditions along
King Street have included festive
decorations, parades, and of course,
shopping. In 1932, the Retail
Merchants Association organized an evening
parade that began on Fayette Street, traveled
down King Street and circled City Hall, where
officials reviewed the procession that featured
bands, drum corps, children dressed in
Christmas costumes and Santa Claus.

Following the end of World War II, the festivities in 1945 were especially memorable. The decorations, described by the Washington Post as the "most elaborate ever

seen in the city," included "evergreen trees on every lamp post strung with lights and tinsel." The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce organized the parade and local businesses funded it, sponsoring decorations along the parade route.



For many years, Christmas decorations of bells, stars, garland and colorful lights were suspended across King Street for several blocks, like these seen in the 300 block in the 1960s, before urban renewal. In 1968, with the completion of the newly designed Market Square, the tree lighting ceremony was held in front of City Hall, a tradition that continues today.



"Out of the Attic" is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as "Marking Time" and explored Alexandria's history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into "Out of the Attic" and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.